

NO 2  
OCT.-NOV.

# Lovelorn

STIRRING STORIES of REAL ROMANCE

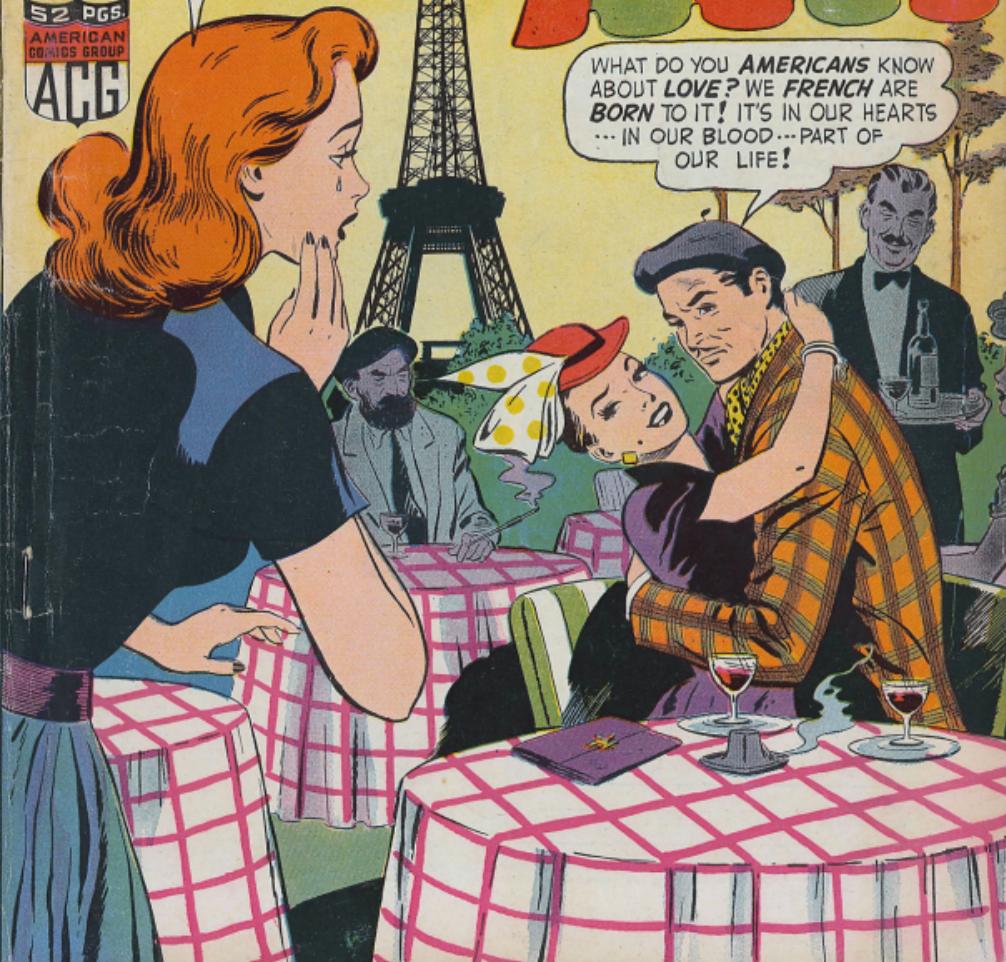
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BUT, ANDRE, I... I DON'T  
UNDERSTAND! YOU TOLD  
ME YOU LOVED ME...

52 PGS.  
AMERICAN  
COMICS GROUP  
ACG

CAFE DE PARIS

WHAT DO YOU AMERICANS KNOW  
ABOUT LOVE? WE FRENCH ARE  
BORN TO IT! IT'S IN OUR HEARTS  
... IN OUR BLOOD... PART OF  
OUR LIFE!



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# Cure of LATIN LOVE



**PARIS**!...THE MAGIC AND ALLURE OF THAT NAME WOKE A SPELL OF ENCHANTMENT AROUND ME, AND ITS WHISPERED PROMISES OF ROMANCE AND GLAMOR CAUSED MY PULSE TO QUICKEN! BUT I REALIZED ... TOO LATE ... THAT A BROKEN HEART WAS THE PRICE I HAD TO PAY FOR HEEDING THE LURE OF LATIN LOVE!"

JOHN  
Belfi

"I'M LAURA MATTHEWS...AND PLAY-ACTING WAS ALWAYS IN MY BLOOD!"

"SO, SIR MURGATROYD! HOW NOW, THAT I FIND YOU PAYING COURT TO A MERE SERVING MAID?"

"WAIT, LADY MARGARET! THERE'S MORE HERE THAN MEETS THE EYE!"

"THIS HAD BEEN MY BEST PERFORMANCE EVER! IT WAS CLASS NIGHT, JUST BEFORE MY COLLEGE COMMENCEMENT! AND AS THE APPLAUSE THUNDERED IN, I REALIZED I'D BEEN A SMASH HIT!"

"RAY, LAURA! WOTTA PERFORMANCE! TERRIFIC!"



"BACK IN MY DRESSING ROOM...WITH THE APPLAUSE STILL ECHOING IN MY EARS..."

OH, COME ON IN, PHIL! HOW DID I LOOK WITH THIS RED WIG?

BEAUTIFUL, LAURA! BUT I... THINK I LIKE YOU EVEN BETTER AS YOU ARE... AS YOURSELF!

YEG, LIKE THAT... YOU ARE LOVELY, LAURA! WHAT SAY TO CELEBRATING YOUR TRIUMPH WITH A SODA AT POP'S PLACE?

A SODA? IS THAT YOUR IDEA OF CELEBRATING? OH, WELL...

I'M REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO COMMENCEMENT! I WIN THE HAWLEY PRIZE FOR SCIENTIFIC AGRICULTURE, I'M GOING TO HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY TO YOU!

YES?... IT'S TOO BAD THE COLLEGE NEVER GIVES A DRAMATIC AWARD... I WONDER IF I'D HAVE GOTTEN ONE IF THEY DID? EVEN THE FACULTY SEEMED TO LIKE MY PERFORMANCE!

"WHAT NIGHT I SLEPT FITFULLY, WAKING A DOZEN TIMES FROM DREAMS OF MYSELF AS A TRIUMPHANT STAR ON BROADWAY, IN LONDON, PARIS..."



"WHEN THE BIG DAY... GRADUATION!"

AND IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE TO AWARD THE HAWLEY PRIZE FOR SCIENTIFIC AGRICULTURE TO... PHILIP LAWTON!



NEXT, I AM PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THE WINNER OF A SPECIAL FACULTY AWARD FOR DRAMATICS... A YEAR'S FREE SCHOLARSHIP IN THE DRAMA SCHOOL OF THE SORBONNE AT PARIS... MISS LAURA MATTHEWS!



"THAT NIGHT, OUTSIDE MY SORORITY HOUSE..."

WELL, I'VE FINALLY GOTTEN WHAT I'VE AIMED AT FOR THESE LAST FOUR YEARS, LAURA! A JOB WENT WITH THE HAWLEY PRIZE... I'M TO BE THE MANAGER OF A LARGE SCIENTIFIC FARM! IT DOESN'T PAY TOO MUCH, BUT IT'S ENOUGH TO SUPPORT A WIFE ON!



"SOMEHOW, I MANAGED TO STUMBLE TO MY FEET, MY EYES BLURRED WITH HAPPY TEARS! IT WAS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE... MY FONDEST HOPE A REALITY! I WAS TO HAVE A CHANCE AT A REAL DRAMATIC CAREER... AND IN PARIS!"

"I WAS ASTONISHED, STUNNED INTO SILENCE AT HIS PROPOSAL! MISINTERPRETING MY SILENCE FOR CONSENT, PHIL SWEEP ME INTO HIS ARMS! AS HIS LIPS MET MINE..."



"PHIL...DON'T! YOU'RE TAKING TOO MUCH FOR GRANTED! IT'S NOT THAT I DON'T LIKE YOU...I JUST CAN'T FANCY MYSELF AS A FARMER'S WIFE! AND BEIDES, YOU KNOW ABOUT MY SORBONNE SCHOLARSHIP!"

"BUT...BUT I THOUGHT YOU CARED FOR ME! WE PRACTICALLY GREW UP TOGETHER, AND I THOUGHT WE BOTH TOOK IT FOR GRANTED WE'D MARRY! I NEVER DREAMED YOU WERE GOING TO TAKE THAT SCHOLARSHIP..."

"TAKE IT! I'M GOING TO GRAB IT, CLUTCH IT...BEFORE THEY CHANGE THEIR MINDS! WHY, IT'S THE CHANCE OF A LIFETIME! WITH A TRAINING LIKE THAT BEHIND ME, THE WORLD IS GOING TO HEAR ABOUT LAURA MATTHEWS!"



"TWO WEEKS LATER I SAILED FOR FRANCE...WITH PHIL WAVING A FAITHFUL FAREWELL! IT WAS GOODBYE TO MY DRAB, UGLAMOROUS LIFE! THE FASCINATION AND MAGNETISM OF AN ARTIST'S LIFE IN PARIS AWAITED ME!"



"MY STUDIES AT THE SORBONNE WERE INSPIRING! I GAINED AN APPRECIATION OF WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A GREAT ACTRESS...AND ENJOYED EVERY MOMENT OF IT!"



"I FIND IN MY SPARE TIME, I WOULD WANDER THROUGH GAY, CAPTIVATING PARIS... ENTRANCED BY THE CAREFREE, ROMANTIC, GALLIC LIFE... ENCHANTED IN A WEB OF GLAMOR!"

"THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, I KEPT GETTING LETTERS FROM PHIL, TELLING ME HOW IMPATIENT HE WAS FOR MY RETURN! BUT WHEN THE YEAR WAS UP, I WROTE HIM OF MY DECISION..."



"IN THE WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED, DISCOURAGEMENT BEGAN TO DOG MY HEELS! I MADE THE ROUNDS OF ALL THE PARIS THEATRICAL PRODUCERS, AND EVERYWHERE IT WAS THE SAME STORY, THE SAME EXCUSE..."



"FINALLY, DOWN TO MY LAST SOU, I DESPERATELY ACCEPTED THE ONLY JOB THAT WAS OFFERED ME---AS SINGER IN A CAFE ON THE MONTPARNasse! THEY DIDN'T PAY MUCH, BUT THE PLACE WAS FREQUENTED BY THEATRICAL PEOPLE---WHICH KEPT MY HOPES ALIVE!"



"I MANAGED TO BRUSH OFF THE WOLVES... KEPT WAITING FOR MY CHANCE! IT CAME---IN THE PERSON OF ANDRE LEBLANC, THE FAMED PARIS ACTOR-DIRECTOR! I WAS DETERMINED TO BRING MYSELF TO HIS ATTENTION... IN THE ONLY WAY I COULD!"

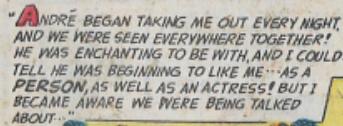


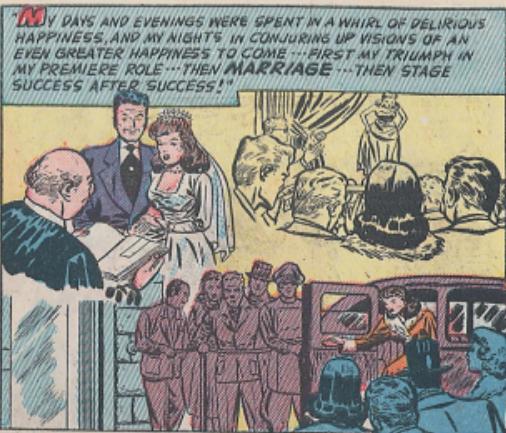
"AND YOU CAN JUST TRY TO GET SOMEONE ELSE FOR THE PLAY---BECAUSE ONLY LUCIENNE ROUART CAN PLAY THAT ROLE!"



"HURT AND HUMILIATION STABBED THROUGH ME LIKE A KNIFE, AND I RAN TO MY DRESSING ROOM, BLIND WITH TEARS! BUT THERE THE HURT GAVE WAY TO A RAGING ANGER..."







WHEN ANDRÉ ARRIVED AND CRUSHED ME IN HIS ARMS, I REALIZED THE HUGE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HIM AND A... A FARMER LIKE PHIL! AND I KNEW THAT MY CHOICE HAD BEEN THE RIGHT ONE!"



NOT ONLY DO YOU GIVE THIS AMERICAN SNIP THE ROLE WHICH YOU PROMISED ME, BUT YOU ALSO GIVE HER THE WORDS OF LOVE WHICH YOU ONCE SPOKE ONLY I WOULD EVER HEAR! YOU... YOU ROUE!

WELL, LUCIENNE, YOU WERE THE ONE WHO WALKED OUT ON ME!... TELL ME, WHAT WOULD YOU DO TO BRING THINGS BACK TO WHERE THEY WERE BETWEEN US?



ANYTHING, MON CHER... ANYTHING! I WILL FORGET MY TEMPERAMENT IF ONLY TO REGAIN YOUR LOVE...



"I WAS PETRIFIED WITH HORROR AND SHOCK! THIS COULDN'T BE HAPPENING TO ME! THE MAN I LOVED COULDN'T BE SAYING THOSE WORDS! IT WAS ALL A MISTAKE... IT HAD TO BE!"

BUT ANDRÉ... I YOU! YOU WERE JUST A CHEAP CAFE SINGER! WHY, COMPARED TO LUCIENNE, YOU'RE CRUDE, MEDIOCRE...



LUCKILY ENOUGH! BUT UNLUCKY FOR YOU, MISTER... BECAUSE BACK WHERE I COME FROM, MEN DON'T TRIFLE WITH WOMEN'S AFFECTIONS LIKE THAT! LAURA SAYS YOU TOLD HER YOU LOVED HER, AND IF YOU DENY IT NOW, I'LL STRIKE YOU DOWN LIKE THE DOG YOU ARE!



ER... I CAN SEE I HAVE CARRIED MY LITTLE TEST TOO FAR! YOU SEE, I WISHED TO LEARN WHETHER LAURA LOVED ME FOR MYSELF... OR FOR THE ROLE I GAVE HER! AND I COULD ONLY TELL BY HER REACTIONS... WHETHER SHE WAS MORE GRIEF-STRICKEN AT THE LOSS OF THE ROLE OR OF MY LOVE! AND SHE PROVED HERSELF, AH, HOW NOBLY!



"THERE WAS NO DOUBTING THE SINCERITY BEHIND ANDRE'S WORDS! MY HEART SOARED WHEN I REALIZED HE HAD ACTUALLY PROVEN HIS OWN LOVE IN HIS URGENT DESIRE TO TEST MINE!"

"AH, DARLING, I LOVED YOU SO, I HAD TO KNOW..."

"WELL...WE MIGHT AS WELL GO!"

"WILL YOU EVER FORGIVE ME FOR DOUBTING YOU?"



"I THREW MYSELF FEVERISHLY INTO THE DAYS OF FRANTIC RE-HEARSALS...AND SUDDENLY OPENING NIGHT WAS UPON ME! EVERYTHING WENT SMOOTHLY UNTIL THE REALISTIC TORCH-LIGHT PARADE TO THE GUILLOTINE...AND THEN... IT HAPPENED!"



"MON DIEU!"

"FIRE!"

"THE AUDIENCE WAS PANIC-STRICKEN AND SO I TRIED TO CALM THEM BY MY OWN EXAMPLE... BY REMAINING WHERE I WAS!"

"LET ME THROUGH! HURRY, YOU FOOLS, RUN!"

"ANDRE...COME BACK!...MESDAMES, MESSIEURS, PLEASE! THERE IS NO DANGER! WALK QUIETLY..."

"QUICK! OUT OF MY WAY! I'VE GOT TO GET TO HER! IT'S TOO LATE! WHAT COURAGE SHE HAD... MAGNIFIQUE!"



"OH, PHIL!"

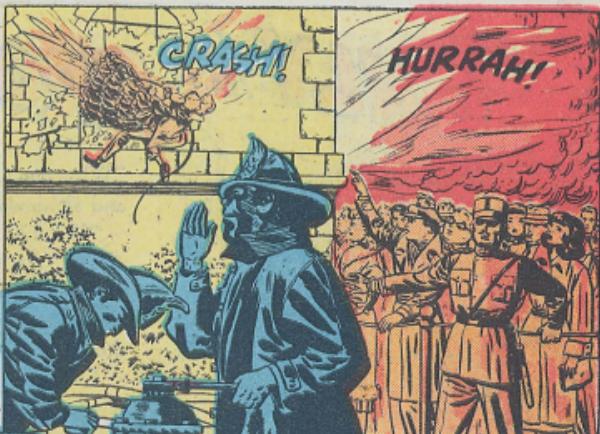
"QUICK, LAURA! TO THE CURTAIN...ON THE SIDE!"

"SOMEHOW, PHIL MANAGED TO GET ME TO THE ROPE THAT RAISED AND LOWERED THE CURTAIN! AND THEN..."

"HOLD ON TIGHT, NOW!"

"I... I'LL TRY!"





# IF ONLY he'd PROPOSE!

EVVA looked at Bill and felt her heart contract within her.

Bill, of course, had no idea that this date was to be anything different from the dates they had enjoyed together for the past two years. He had ordered cocktails and was busily consulting the menu as Evva looked at him.

"Bill," she said. "Darling." But she did not say these words aloud. For Evva had at last determined to do what she had so long thought of doing.

Again and again, she went over it in her mind. She was mad about Bill, really, truly, deeply in love with him. And she knew Bill was happy with her. But as for love, never a word from him! The months had grown into years and seeing Bill had become a mixture of ecstasy and torture for Evva.

"I've got to give him up!" she thought. "This can't go on . . . it can't! I'll find some way to tell him, to explain, without making it too hard!"

Bill had given the waiter their dinner orders, and he now faced Evva, ready for conversation. "What's on your mind, lovely?" he asked. "You've got a thundercloud in your face!"

"I'll tell him now!" Evva thought. "This is the time!" She smiled at him, a small forced smile. "Bill," she said, "this is going to be a bit difficult, so please be patient and listen. You see, for quite some time now, I've . . ."

"Who's a beautiful gal?" a male voice, thick and blurry cut in. "I wanna meet this beautiful gal!"

Bill turned to the intruder, a very tipsy young man, who kept smiling at Evva.

"Why don't you go back to your table and sit down?" he suggested firmly.

"What?" The young man was incredulous. "An' leave this beautiful gal? Here I've just foun' the gal I've been waitin' for an' he says go away! Nothin' doin'!"

Evva watched in alarm as Bill, his jaw set, started to rise from his chair. "Bill . . . don't . . ."

"Yeshir, sweetest gal I ever saw," the tipsy young man was saying, as he started to put his arm around Evva's shoulder.

"Take your hands off her!" Bill snapped. He was out of his chair now and had the visitor by the collar. "Don't touch her!"

"Says who?" the intruder showed fight. He lunged at Bill, fist aimed at Bill's face. He never connected. With a fury that Evva had never suspected in him, Bill shot a well-aimed fist in the direction of the young man's jaw. Two waiters helped the intruder to his feet and showed him out.

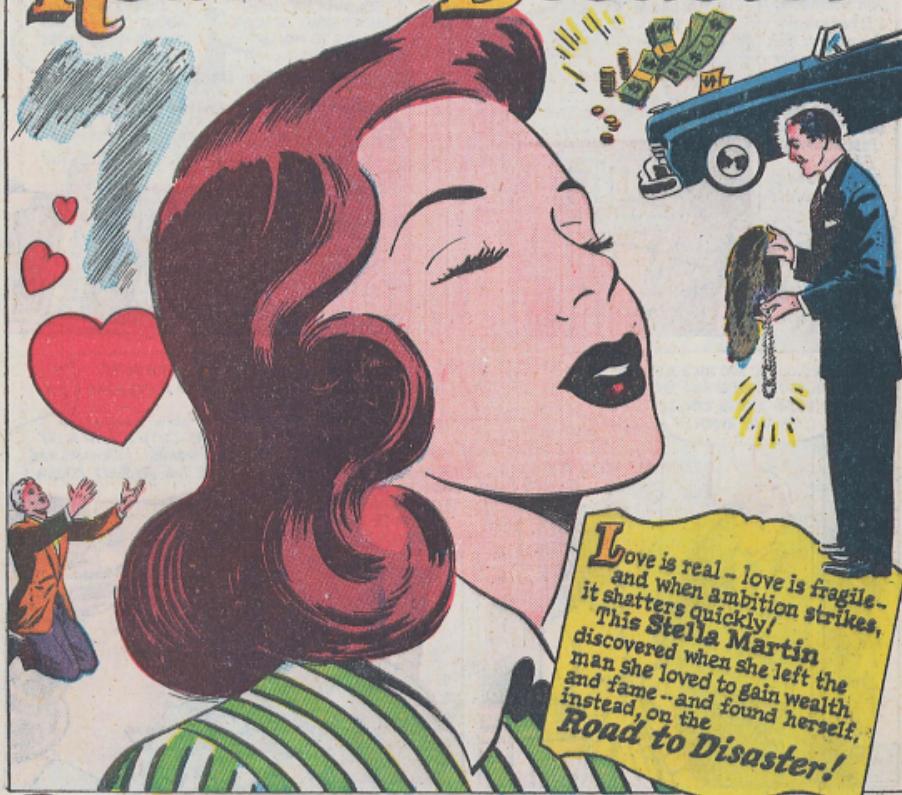
Bill was breathing a bit rapidly as he resumed his seat. "I'm sorry, baby," he apologized, "but I never realized before how angry I'd get if another guy tried to step in! I think that hit me harder than anything. The circumstances aren't very romantic, Evva, but I'm trying to propose! Will you marry me?"

"Bill," Evva said. "Darling!" Only this time, she said the words aloud.

"I'm going to kiss you right now!" Bill said, doing it. "And by the way, what were you going to say when Romeo stepped in?"

"I've forgotten," Evva answered.

# Road to Disaster



**"P**erhaps... had I known what was ahead of me... I would not have been so sure of myself that day of my graduation! But I knew only one thing — that life was before me... and I would find WEALTH... FAME... ROMANCE!"

I'M THE LUCKIEST GIRL  
IN THE WORLD, STELLA!  
I'VE ALREADY GOT A  
JOB AS SECRETARY TO  
THE SALES MANAGER  
OF A DRUG FIRM!  
HOW ABOUT YOU?

I WOULDN'T TAKE A JOB LIKE  
**THAT!** DO YOU THINK I WORKED  
SO HARD IN SCHOOL JUST TO  
SPEND MY TIME IN SOME  
STUFFY OLD OFFICE?  
**NOT ME!** I WANT  
SOMETHING WITH A  
**GLAMOROUS**  
FUTURE!



"But what I wanted wasn't easy to find!"

There were plenty of jobs — Secretary to a shirt manufacturer, typist in a meat packing plant... I laughed at these offers!!

W. S. Rogers.

YOU'VE BEEN  
JOB-HUNTING FOR  
MORE THAN TWO  
WEEKS NOW!  
ISN'T THERE  
**ANYTHING**  
YOU CAN DO,  
STELLA?

I'M NOT LOOKING FOR  
JUST **ANYTHING**  
AT ALL! I KNOW WHAT  
I WANT--LISTEN TO **THIS**,  
**OTHER!** **YOUNG LAWYER**  
**TARTING OWN BUSINESS**  
**EEKS CONFIDENTIAL**  
**ECRETARY.** -- I'M  
GOING TO APPLY FOR  
**THIS JOB!**

"I applied... and got the job! From the first I liked my boss—Don Simpson! I liked everything about him... his smile... the twinkle in his eyes... his calm assurance and determination! Instinctively, I knew he would have a great career!"

I CAN'T AFFORD TO PAY MUCH... YET! BUT YOU'LL ENJOY THE WORK... BECAUSE I INTEND TO DO THINGS IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION!

I WANT A JOB WITH A FUTURE, MR. SIMPSON... SO IT'S OKAY WITH ME!

"And the work WAS inspiring! No one in need of help was ever turned away!"

MR. SIMPSON, THESE BILLS HAVE TO BE PAID AND THERE ISN'T ENOUGH IN THE BANK! I THOUGHT IF I MIGHT REMIND SOME OF YOUR CLIENTS TO PAY UP WHAT...

SHUCKS, STELLA—STOP CALLING ME MR. SIMPSON! THE NAME IS DON! AND FORGET ABOUT COLLECTING THOSE FEES! MOST OF THEM CAN'T AFFORD IT, ANYWAY!

BESIDES... IT'S TOO NICE A DAY TO SIT IN THIS STUFFY OFFICE AND WORRY ABOUT BUSINESS! COME ON, LET'S GO TO THE PARK!

BUT, DON... OH, ALL RIGHT! YOU'RE THE BOSS!

"Don's cases were few—and far between! Soon, going to the park became a regular part of our lives...."

LOOK AT THIS LITTLE DEVIL! HE ISN'T AFRAID OF ANYTHING—HE KNOWS WHAT HE WANTS AND GOES RIGHT AFTER IT! JUST LIKE A LOT OF PEOPLE!

HE IS CUTE... AND NOT SO DUMB! PERHAPS HE HAS THE RIGHT IDEA!

"It was an innocent enough conversation... But that night, it came back to me... and doubts—uneasy, restless—came into my mind!"

BETTER WATCH YOUR STEP, STELLA MARTIN! DON IS BECOMING MORE IMPORTANT TO YOU THAN YOUR CAREER! KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING BEFORE YOU FIND YOURSELF IN LOVE!

"Don had a strange, joyous way about everything he did... and it was contagious! Time and time again, I would be caught up in it..."

COME ON, STELLA—FORGET WORK FOR AWHILE! WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A PICNIC—ON THE ROOF!

BUT, DON—THERE'S A TIME FOR PLAY AND A TIME FOR WORK! YOU'LL NEVER AMOUNT TO ANYTHING IF...

I'M ENJOYING LIFE... AND THAT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT THING, STELLA! WHO WANTS TO BECOME A SLICK, MONEY-GRUBBING CORPORATION LAWYER? NOT I!

BUT WHAT ABOUT YOUR DREAMS OF SUCCESS, DON?





"There was no sleep for me that night... all the stars in the universe whispered softly to me! I WAS IN LOVE!"

I DIDN'T DREAM IT COULD HAPPEN TO ME! NOTHING CAN STOP US NOW... WORKING TOGETHER, LOVING EACH OTHER THE WAY WE DO! HE'LL BE A GREAT LAWYER... AND I'LL BE AT HIS SIDE!

"Don seemed a new man... with a new determination! Soon...

DARLING, YOU DON'T KNOW HOW AMBITIOUS YOU'VE MADE ME! I'M GOING TO GET A REALLY IMPORTANT CASE... THE CHAIN STORE CORPORATION MATTER!

WHY, THAT SOUNDS BIG—AND IMPORTANT! I'M HAPPY FOR YOU, DON—FOR BOTH OF US!

I'M GOING TO HAVE A CONFERENCE ON THE CASE TOMORROW—BUT WHERE ARE YOU GOING--?

I'M TAKING THE REST OF THE DAY OFF! I'VE GOT A FEW THINGS TO DO--FOR TOMORROW!

"I knew how important it was for Don to make the right impression on the corporation's representative! I hurried to my bank, and withdrew my carefully hoarded savings..."

I'LL TAKE ALL OF THESE! MY FIANCÉ IS THE ATTORNEY FOR THE CHAIN STORE CORPORATION, YOU KNOW... AND I MUST DRESS THE PART!

"My next stop was the beauty parlor..."

AH, MISS STELLA... SOMETHING IS HAPPEN TO YOU! YOUR EYES, THEY ARE SHINING LIKE DIAMONDS! YOU'RE RIGHT, ANTOINETTE! I'M IN LOVE WITH THE MOST WONDERFUL MAN IN THE WORLD! SOME DAY, YOU'LL SEE HIS PICTURE IN ALL THE PAPERS... WHEN HE GOES INTO POLITICS! BUT NOW I MUST LOOK MY BEST FOR TOMORROW'S CONFERENCE!

"The next morning, I hurried to the office, my heart beating wildly--for I knew that at last, Don and I were on our way to success!"

I'M SORRY I'M LATE!

OH, COME IN, DEAR! I WANT YOU TO MEET MRS. MARIETTI! IT'S ABOUT THE CHAIN STORE CORPORATION CASE!

MRS. MARIETTI OWNS A SMALL GROCERY WHICH THE CHAIN STORE PEOPLE ARE TRYING TO TAKE OVER--BY BREAKING HER LEASE SO THAT SHE'LL HAVE TO MOVE OUT! I'M GOING TO STOP THEM!

BUT... BUT... I THOUGHT...

"So that was his **BIG** case--his **IMPORTANT** case! When the old woman had finally left..."

HOW COULD YOU DO THIS TO ME, THE **CORPORATION**? BUT YOU KNOW I COULDN'T DO **THAT**! YOU WERE REPRESENTING THE **CORPORATION**! WHY... THEY'RE TRYING TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS POOR OLD LADY! STELLA, IT'S A MATTER OF JUSTICE...

**JUSTICE, DOME** AND WHERE IS JUSTICE FOR **ME**? CAN YOU **EAT** JUSTICE? PAY THE **RENT** WITH IT? RAISE A **FAMILY** WITH IT? JUSTICE IS FINE--BUT YOU'RE IN BUSINESS FOR **FEES**!

CLIENTS WHO PAY BIG FEES DON'T COME TO **ME**! ONLY PEOPLE WHO NEED HELP--

LIKE MRS. MARIETTI! AND I CAN'T REFUSE TO HELP THEM! MAYBE YOU'D BE BETTER OFF WITHOUT ME!

DON'T... DON'T SAY THAT!



"My heart went out to him... I rushed into his arms and covered his face with kisses!"

I'LL DO EVERYTHING YOU SAY, STELLA! I'LL TAKE THE NEXT BIG CASE THAT COMES ALONG!



"It was the next day that I remembered my advice to Don--that we had to go after the cases we wanted! And what reminded me was a headline in the papers..."

THERE'S A CASE, DON! THAT RACKETEER? HE'S WHY CAN'T YOU GO PROBABLY AS GUILTY AS THEY AFTER STEVE HEGEN? COME! AND BEIDES, HE HAS HE COULD USE A LAWYER LIKE YOU!



BUT THAT'S JUST THE POINT! WITH THAT KIND OF LAWYER--ONE WHO IS ALREADY UNDER SUSPICION-- STEVE HEGEN WON'T STAND A CHANCE IN COURT! BUT WITH YOU TO DEFEND HIM--

IT'S NO USE TALKING ABOUT

IT, STELLA! I COULDN'T EVEN GET HEGEN ON THE PHONE... MUCH LESS HAVE HIM WALK INTO MY OFFICE!



"Having Steve Hegen come to US wasn't what I had in mind! I decided to go AFTER him... AND GET THE CASE FOR DON!"



"It worked... and soon I was shown into Steve Hegen's private office! Quietly, he heard me out..."

EVERY JUDGE IN THESE PARTS KNOWS THAT **DON SIMPSON** WOULDN'T TAKE A CASE UNLESS HE WAS POSITIVE HIS CLIENT IS **INNOCENT**! HE CAN WIN-- DEPEND ON IT!

IT WON'T BE THAT EASY! THE MAIN WITNESS AGAINST ME, **GEORGE HEINZ**, WILL SWEAR THAT I'M INVOLVED IN THIS NUMBERS RACKET!

HE'LL BE LYING, OF COURSE, BECAUSE HE HATES ME AND WANTS TO GET ME IN TROUBLE! BUT HOW CAN I PROVE IT?

TALK IT OVER WITH **DON SIMPSON**, MR. HEGEN! HE'LL PROVE YOUR INNOCENCE!



"YOU'VE SOLD ME, YOUNG LADY! LET'S GO AND SEE YOUR LAWYER! I HAVEN'T MUCH TIME TO GET MY CASE PREPARED!"



"On the way, I barely heard Hegen's polite attempts to make conversation! All I thought of was that this case surely would be the making of Don... of the fee... of more cases coming to him!"

DON... I'VE BROUGHT MR. HEGEN TO SEE YOU ABOUT HIS CASE! I WAS SURE THAT YOU COULD HELP HIM! YOU'VE GOT QUITE A GIRL WORKING FOR YOU, MR. SIMPSON! I LIKE HER IDEA--AND I THINK WE CAN DO BUSINESS!



"My heart froze within me when I saw the expression that came over Don's face! He turned to Hegen, his voice full of a terrible controlled fury!"

I DON'T DO BUSINESS WITH SKINNS LIKE YOU! I DON'T DEFEND THE GUILTY! I'D RATHER STARVE THAN TAKE A FEE FROM YOUR KIND! GET OUT!"

I'LL GO--BUT YOU'RE A YOUNG FOOL, SIMPSON!



"As Hegen turned to leave, I saw all my dreams crumble into dust!

My future of ease, comfort, position, would never come... I knew that on the instant! An anger swept over me like a hot flame!"

TELL ME TO GO, TOO, DON! AFTER ALL, I ASKED MR. HEGEN TO COME HERE! WHY DON'T YOU CALL ME? THE NAMES YOU CALLED HIM? YOU'VE SMASHED MY HOPES FOR SUCCESS--GRIND YOUR HEEL INTO THEM NOW!

YOU DIDN'T REALIZE WHAT YOU WERE DOING, STELLA!





"I stormed furiously out of the office! The next thing I knew, I was home in bed... crying out all the pain in my heart!"

"Next day - a telephone call! I heard Steve Hegen's soothing voice invite me out to dinner... What did he want of me? I'd soon learn..."



"But he felt it was his responsibility! He started taking me places -- and as the pain in my heart grew less -- Steve Hegen gradually began to loom larger in my mind!"



"I still remember that throbbing night on the bay -- "



"He let the motor idle -- placed his arm about my shoulders..."

I BROUGHT YOU OUT HERE BECAUSE I HAD TO ASK YOU SOMETHING! FROM THE MOMENT I FIRST MET YOU, I KNEW YOU WERE MY KIND OF WOMAN! WILL YOU MARRY ME?

I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY, STEVE...

"Before my eyes, Don's smiling face rose -- but I brushed it away! It was STEVE who was beside me..."

I... I LIKE YOU A LOT, STEVE! YES-- I'LL MARRY YOU!

DARLING! I WAS HOPING YOU'D SAY THAT!



"The days passed swiftly after that! Steve deluged me with gifts... and I built my beautiful castles in the air! Don was almost forgotten... **ALMOST...** until..."

**STELLA!** WAIT... I HAVE TO SEE YOU... TALK TO YOU!

DON! OH--  
DON!

I KNOW YOU'VE BEEN GOING OUT WITH STEVE HEGEN--AND YOU **MUSTN'T!** HE'S NO GOOD--A HARD, RUTHLESS RACKETEER! HE'LL ONLY CAUSE YOU PAIN... AND BESESIDE... OH, STELLA, **I LOVE YOU!**

HOW CAN YOU SAY SUCH THINGS ABOUT STEVE, DON? **HE** HEALED THE PAIN **YOU CAUSED** ME!



YOU'RE NOT ONLY JEALOUS OF HIM -- YOU'RE ENVIOUS BECAUSE HE'S A **SUCCESS!** GOODBYE!

YOU'RE  
MAKING--  
A TERRIBLE  
MISTAKE!

"I hurried into my house quickly... to hide the tears that welled up in my eyes! Steve was waiting for me-- and one look at his face made me forget my own troubles!"

TO GO TO PRISON **NOW...**  
TO LOSE YOU... I CAN'T  
BEAR THE THOUGHT  
OF IT!

OH, STEVE!  
IF THERE WAS  
ONLY SOMETHING  
I COULD **DO**  
FOR YOU!

WHAT'S THE  
MATTER? -- AS IF THE WORLD  
WAS COMING TO  
AN END? YES, IT  
**IS, FOR ME!** MY  
LAWYER TELLS ME I'LL  
LOSE MY CASE UNLESS  
I CAN MAKE HEINZ TELL  
THE TRUTH INSTEAD OF  
LIES! HE'LL BE THE  
MAIN WITNESS  
AGAINST ME AT  
MY TRIAL!



THERE **IS** SOMETHING YOU CAN DO, STELLA! IF YOU'D ONLY GO TO HEINZ -- PLEAD WITH HIM TO TELL THE TRUTH... FOR THE SAKE OF OUR LOVE...

I'LL DO IT!  
I'LL BE THERE  
AT TWO  
O'CLOCK!



"I took a cab to the address Steve gave me. There was no answer when I rang the bell... but the door was slightly open. I entered... **INTO A NIGHTMARE OF HORROR!**"

OH-NH!



"Numb with terror, I stooped beside the body on the floor! My hand touched the revolver, and I lifted it automatically! At that very instant, I saw a man step out from behind a door... there was a flash of light..."



"In his arms, I sobbed out my story..."

I CAN'T BELIEVE STEVE WOULD SEND ME THERE DELIBERATELY!

HOW COULD HE?

BUT IT WAS STEVE, DEAR -- I'M SURE OF IT! AND IF I'M RIGHT, HE SHOULD BE HERE SOON!



"At that moment, there was a cold laugh from the doorway! STEVE! But it wasn't the Steve I knew!"

THE LOVERS -- REUNITED! AND DON SIMPSON WILL DEFEND ME IN COURT AND USE HIS REPUTATION FOR HONESTY TO GET ME OFF... BECAUSE HE WOULDN'T WANT TO SEE HIS SWEETHEART GO TO THE CHAIR! IS IT A DEAL?



NO, IT'S NOT A DEAL, HEGEN! AND THIS SHOULD CONVINCE YOU THAT I MEAN WHAT I SAY!

DON! DO WHAT HE SAYS! IT'S MY ONLY CHANCE!



HE... HE'S GONE! WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO NOW?

I'M CALLING THE POLICE, STELLA! YOU'LL HAVE TO GO TO JAIL!

WOMAN: MOD VIMROTT WAJ TA



"JAIL! A cold, dank cell! And DON was sending me there!"

YOU -- YOU'D TURN ME OVER TO THE POLICE? AND I THOUGHT YOU'D PROTECT ME! I HATE YOU, DON! HATE YOU!

THERE'S NO

OTHER WAY OUT! YOU CAN'T RUN AWAY FROM A MURDER CHARGE!



"PRISON!"

And I, Stella Martin, an accused murderer!

Tears, emotion... all were drained from me! In a daze, I seemed to awaken ages later, when the Cell door suddenly clang'd open...

DON! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? WHY DID YOU COME?

I'M YOUR ATTORNEY, STELLA! HEGEN HAS SENT THE PHOTOGRAPHS TO THE POLICE... ANONYMOUSLY, OF COURSE! I WANT YOU TO TELL THE TRUTH IN COURT TOMORROW... THE WHOLE TRUTH... EVERYTHING FROM THE BEGINNING, EXACTLY AS IT HAPPENED!

BUT... WHY DID YOU TAKE MY CASE? I HAVE NO MONEY...

YOU KNOW IT ISN'T A FREE THAT I WORK FOR--OR HAVE YOU ALREADY FORGOTTEN? I WANT TO HELP THOSE IN NEED OF HELP... I WANT TO SEE JUSTICE CARRIED OUT! THAT WAS THE VERY THING YOU TRIED TO TAKE AWAY FROM ME!

"Dimly, I heard his words... and for the first time, I began to UNDERSTAND! I thanked my lucky stars that I had never succeeded in destroying Don's ideals! They were my shield and protection in court..."

YOU'VE HEARD THE DEFENDANT'S STORY -- AND I CAN PROVE THAT HEGEN PLANNED EVERY DETAIL OF THE TRAP INTO WHICH SHE WAS LURED -- INCLUDING THE MURDER OF GEORGE HEINZ! YOU SEE, I SUSPECTED THAT HE'D TRY TO USE STELLA MARTIN! -- SO I HIRED PRIVATE DETECTIVES TO DOG HIS EVERY STEP! THEY FOLLOWED HIM TO HEINZ'S HOME -- AND SAW HIM COMMIT THE MURDER BEFORE SHE ARRIVED!

"IT WAS A STUNNING SURPRISE, AND THE COURT WAS IN AN UPROAR! AS THE WITNESSES RANMED HOME THE CASE AGAINST HEGEN, I KNEW THAT I WAS FREE! AND I KNEW THAT DON LOVED ME -- HAD NEVER STOPPED LOVING ME -- AND THAT I LOVED HIM!"

OH, DARLING, DARLING! WHY DID YOU FRIGHTEN ME SO? WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME? I HAD TO KEEP IT SECRET, STELLA! AND HEGEN TRAPPED HIMSELF! I COULD HAVE DEFENDED HIM -- BUT I KNEW THAT SOMEONE WOULD STILL HAVE TO PAY FOR HEINZ'S MURDER EVEN IF I DID SAVE HIM FROM THE CHARGE AGAINST HIM! HE'D HAVE TURNED YOU OVER TO THE POLICE ANYWAY!

CAN YOU FORGIVE ME, DEAR? FORGIVE ME MY REAL CRIME... MY LACK OF FAITH IN YOU?... AND I KNOW NOW THAT WITHOUT PRINCIPLE, WITHOUT HONESTY, THERE CAN BE NO REAL LOVE!

I WON'T HOLD YOUR MISTAKES AGAINST YOU! BUT SINCE YOU ARE GUILTY, WE'LL ASK THE JUDGE FOR HIS OPINION!

"My heart was laughing joyously as we turned to the judge! Don was his gay self again... and as always, he pulled me along into his mood!"

WE'RE BOTH GUILTY OF BEING VERY MUCH IN LOVE, YOUR HONOR!

IN THAT CASE, I'LL GIVE YOU BOTH A LIFE SENTENCE! STEP UP AND I'LL MARRY YOU!

# HEART OF STONE

EVERYONE ENVIED JANET PROCTOR! THEY LIKED THE CAREFREE WAY SHE BREEZED ALONG--HER GAY LAUGHTER BRUSHING ASIDE THE SERIOUS THINGS IN LIFE! JANET COULDN'T IMAGINE HERSELF BEING SERIOUS ABOUT ANYTHING, EVEN...ROMANCE! SHE NEVER KNEW ITS TRUE MEANING...UNTIL THE DAY LOVE FLAMED BACK AT HER...MELTING HER HEART OF STONE!



AN ECONOMICS CLASS AT THE BENTLEY SCHOOL...

DE  
AND NOW, MISS PROCTOR, WILL YOU DEFINE THE LAW OF SUPPLY AND DEMAND?

CAPITAL LABOR GOV.



WELL, IN MY OPINION, IT'S SIMPLY... SIMPLY... HA! HA!... I MEAN, IT'S... HA! HA!





"STRANGE--EVERY OTHER GIRL AT BENTLEY WOULD HAVE SWOONED AT HIS VERY TOUCH, BUT I...I LAUGHED!"

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU, JANET? CAN'T YOU BE SERIOUS, EVEN FOR A MOMENT?

SORRY, BILL! LET'S GO BACK TO THE DANCE, SHALL WE?

"WHEN CAME GRADUATION DAY, AND I HEADED INTO THE WORLD TOWARDS THE ONLY THING I COULD REGARD SERIOUSLY--MY LIVELIHOOD!"



"I GOT A JOB AS SALESCLERK AT THE BIRDWELL DEPARTMENT STORE --"

BUT, JANET--I'VE BEEN HERE EVERY DAY FOR THE LAST TWO WEEKS TRYING TO DATE YOU! HOW MANY TIES DO I HAVE TO BUY BEFORE YOU SAY YES?

I'M SORRY, JACK, BUT I GUESS I'M JUST TOO BUSY THESE DAYS!... I'LL WRAP UP THIS TIE FOR YOU!



YOU SEEM LIKE A NICE FELLOW--BUT RIGHT NOW I'M MORE INTERESTED IN MY WORK THAN IN GOING OUT!... THANK YOU, AND COME AGAIN!

GUESS I'LL GIVE UP! EVERYTHING BUT YOUR WORK JUST SEEMS AMUSING TO YOU!



"Later--IN THE EMPLOYEES' LOUNGE!"

OH, PHYLIS, HE'S REALLY CUTE! I CAN SEE WHY YOU FELL IN LOVE WITH HIM! MMMMM!

YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN, MARY! STEVE IS SUCH A WONDERFUL GUY THAT-- WELL--I GUESS ANY GIRL WOULD LOVE HIM!

EMPLOYEES ONLY



"ANY GIRL? IT DIDN'T SEEM POSSIBLE THAT ROMANCE COULD FAIL TO LEAVE AN IMPRESSION ON VIBRANT YOUTH--BUT THEN THERE WAS JANET PROCTOR! SOMEHOW-- I FELT DIFFERENTLY!"

HI, JANET! COME FEAST YOUR EYES ON THIS HUNK OF MAN AND DROOL WITH US!

ONLY A SIRLOIN STEAK COULD MAKE ME DROOL, SILLY!

AND THE ONLY THING ANY "HUNK OF MAN" IS GOOD FOR IS IF HE BUYS ME ONE!



HEY, KIDS, DID YOU SEE OUR NEW DEPARTMENT HEAD--THE ONE WHO'S UNDER EXECUTIVE TRAINING? I JUST SAW HIM, AND OOOHHH--HE'S DIVINE!

THAT'S FOR ME!

THERE'S THE BELL, YOU LOVESICK CREATURES! LET'S GET BACK TO WORK!

CLANG!



"JOHNNY MERTON SEEMED LIKE A NICE FELLOW---BUT NOTH-  
ING TO RAVE ABOUT! HE WAS JUST A TYPICAL BRIGHT  
EFFICIENCY BOY!"

THERE HE IS NOW,  
JANET!...

WELL---DON'T YOU  
THINK HE'S SIMPLY  
THRILLING?

I'D BE MORE THRILLED  
IF HE NOTICES ME ENOUGH  
TO GIVE ME A PROMOTION!

"MY HEART  
WAS SINGING  
---I KNEW  
I'D GET  
PROMOTED  
SOMEDAY!  
THEN---  
SEVERAL  
DAYS LATER,  
WHILE ON MY  
WAY TO  
LUNCH..."

OH---HELLO, MR.  
MERTON! ---I WAS  
JUST GOING OUT  
TO LUNCH TODAY! THERE  
ARE SEVERAL DEPART-  
MENTAL PROBLEMS I'D  
LIKE TO TALK OVER WITH  
YOU---PERHAPS YOU CAN  
HELP ME SOLVE  
THEM!

"IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE HE DID NOTICE ME! ONE  
AFTERNOON..."

MISS PROCTOR  
---I WANT TO COMPLIMENT  
YOU ON THE WAY YOU'VE  
BEEN HANDLING YOUR  
WORK! I'M TURNING IN  
AN EXCELLENT RE-  
PORT ON YOUR  
PROGRESS!

THANK  
YOU, MR.  
MERTON!

"THERE WERE  
LOTS OF DATES  
WITH JOHNNY  
AFTER THAT!  
HE ALWAYS  
SEEMED TO  
HAVE SOME  
BUSINESS  
PROBLEMS  
TO TALK OVER  
WITH ME!"

"ONE NIGHT---FOLLOWING  
A DINNER ENGAGEMENT---  
WE WERE TAKING A STROLL  
THROUGH THE PARK..."

"...NOW IF YOU COULD TRANS-  
FER THAT SURPLUS MER-  
CHANDISE AND...

"UH---LET'S SIT  
DOWN HERE FOR A  
MOMENT AND---  
AND FORGET TALK-  
ING ABOUT THAT  
CONFOUNDED  
BUSINESS FOR A  
CHANGE! IS THAT  
ALL YOU'RE IN-  
TERESTED IN?"

BUT MR. MERTON, I  
...I DON'T SEEM TO  
UNDERSTAND...

ALL THESE WEEKS  
WE'VE BEEN TO-  
GETHER---COULDN'T  
YOU TELL---HAVEN'T  
YOU GUESSED  
THAT---THAT...



"LUCKY? IT  
WAS MORE THAN  
I HAD EVER  
DARED HOPE FOR  
— LIKE A DREAM  
COME TRUE!  
YET SOMEHOW—  
INSTEAD OF  
BLISSFUL  
ELATION, I  
FOUND MY  
LIFE STRANGELY  
EMPTY... A  
PECULIAR  
SENSE OF  
LOSS  
GRIPPED ME!  
I KEPT BUSY  
AT MY WORK  
TRYING TO  
SUBMERGE  
THAT  
FEELING..."



**B**UT HARD WORK DIDN'T SEEM TO HELP! DURING THE LONG NIGHTS THAT FOLLOWED EACH OTHER ENDLESSLY, MY HEART BECAME A DEEP WELL OF LONELINESS... FILLING MY EYES WITH HOT TEARS I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND!"

**O**NE NIGHT... AFTER HOURS OF FITFUL TOSSED... I WAS CONSCIOUS OF MY PRECIOUS SLEEP BEING STIRRED BY A DISTURBING DREAM..."



**Z**AWOKE WITH A START... A HOT, ANGRY FLUSH SWEEPING MY CHEEKS... SEARING MY HEART! WAS THAT **ME** I SAW IN THAT DREAM?... **ME**, RUNNING AFTER **JOHNNY MERTON**?... IT WAS UTTERLY RIDICULOUS!"

JANET OLD GIRL, WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH YOU? NO MAN'S GOOD FOR ANYTHING BUT A LAUGH!



**T**HAT'S HOW THINGS WERE WHEN THE DAY OF OUR ANNUAL EMPLOYEES' OUTING ARRIVED! SOMEHOW, I WASN'T ENJOYING IT MUCH..."



ATTENTION, EVERYONE! THE FIRST EVENT WILL BE THE THREE-LEGGED OBSTACLE RACE! NAMES OF THE PARTNERS WILL BE DRAWN FROM A HAT!

PICNIC GROUNDS

**T**HE FIRST NAMES RANG OUT... AND A HOT FLUSH SEARED MY COUNTERFEAT! THIS COULDN'T BE! JOHNNY AND I HATED EACH OTHER, DIDN'T WE? AND NOW THEY WERE GOING TO... TIE US TOGETHER!"



**T**HINGS HAPPENED FAST... AND THERE DIDN'T SEEM TO BE ANYTHING EITHER OF US COULD DO ABOUT IT!"



"WE DIDN'T EXCHANGE A WORD AS WE STUMBLLED AWKWARDLY THROUGH THE WOODS TOGETHER... UNTIL SUDDENLY I TRIPPED!"



"I'VE SPRAINED MY ANKLE A LITTLE! IT'S NOTHING MUCH... I CAN MAKE IT BACK!"

"NONSENSE! I'LL CARRY YOU BACK, JANET... WE CAN'T TAKE A CHANCE MAKING IT WORSE!"



"NESTLED IN HIS ARMS, I SUDDENLY FOUND MYSELF LIKING THE SENSATION OF CLOSNESS... THAT FEELING OF NEARNESS TO JOHNNY THAT SURGED UP WITHIN ME! UNCONSCIOUSLY, MY ARMS TIGHTENED ABOUT HIM..."



"THE WORLD MELTED AROUND ME... LIFTING MY SOUL TO AN ECSTASY I'D NEVER KNOWN! IN THAT MOMENT, MY HEART FELT A SUDDEN AWAKENING... AND I KNEW THAT THIS WAS WHAT I HAD ALWAYS WANTED... THIS WAS A LOVE I HAD NEVER KNOWN!"



"HEN, SUDDENLY, I FOUND MYSELF SHOCKED INTO A REALITY THAT STUNNED MY SENSES!"



"THERE WAS ONLY THE AGONIZED THUD OF MY HEART AS I STOOD THERE HELPLESSLY... WATCHING JOHNNY LEAVE ME... TAKING AWAY THE LOVE I HAD GIVEN HIM!"



"NOW IT WAS TOO LATE! DAZED WITH THE THOUGHT THAT I HAD LOST HIM FOREVER, I KNEW THAT I HAD TO RUN SOMEWHERE... ANYWHERE! A MAD PANIC SEIZED ME... PLUNGING ME HEADLONG INTO THE WOODS!"



"IT SEEMED LIKE HOURS THAT I RAN THROUGH THE WOODS! THEN, SUDDENLY, I FOUND MYSELF SURROUNDED BY A WALL OF FLAME... A

**FOREST FIRE!** MY MIND FLASHED BACK TO THE SMOKE WE HAD SEEN BEFORE THE RACE--AND NOW I WAS ENGULPED IN IT!"



**HOT**  
FLAMES LICKED CLOSER AS THE RING OF FIRE TIGHTENED AROUND ME! THERE WAS NO ESCAPE--I WAS TRAPPED! I HUGGED THE GROUND... FEELING MYSELF GROW WEAKER... WEAKER...



"THEN, JUST AS THE WORLD CLOSED DOWN AROUND ME..."



"THROUGH A FIERY FURNACE--WITH DEATH THREATENING AT EACH STEP! AND FINALLY... SAFETY!"

**SAFE?** DO YOU EXPECT THANKS FOR GIVING ME FROM A LIFE NO LONGER WORTH LIVING? I DON'T RUB IT IN, JOHNNY! YOU'VE SHOWN ME UP FOR WHAT I AM... NOW STOP TORTURING ME AND GET OUT OF MY LIFE FOR EVER!



"BUT JOHNNY WASN'T LISTENING TO ME! HE WAS TAKING ME IN HIS ARMS--TELLING ME WHAT I HAD LOST HOPE OF EVER HEARING AGAIN!"

BUT, JANET DARLING... CAN'T YOU READ WHAT'S IN MY **HEART**? I HAD TO TREAT YOU AS I DID--IF ONLY TO MAKE YOU SEE WHAT WAS IN YOUR OWN **HEART**. I DON'T YOU SEE THAT... **I'VE LOVED YOU AND ALWAYS WILL?**

ON--JOHNNY, DEAR--I--I'VE BEEN SO FOOLISH ABOUT EVERYTHING--ALL MY LIFE! BUT NOW--NOW THAT I'VE FINALLY FOUND **TRUE LOVE**--I PROMISE NEVER TO LAUGH AT IT AGAIN!

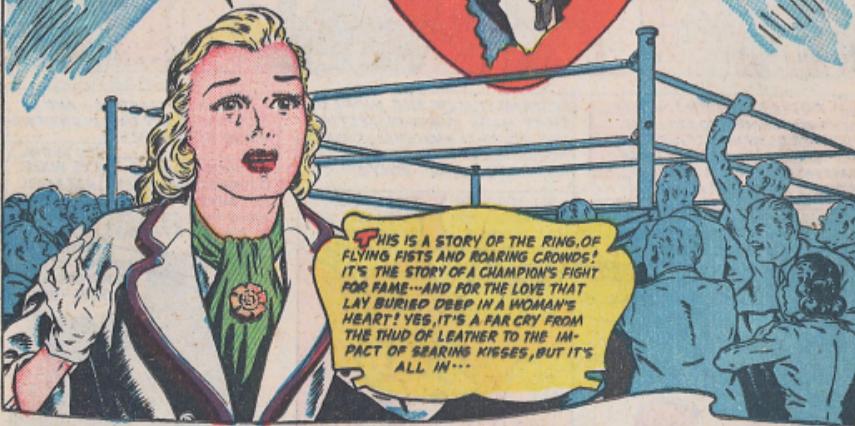
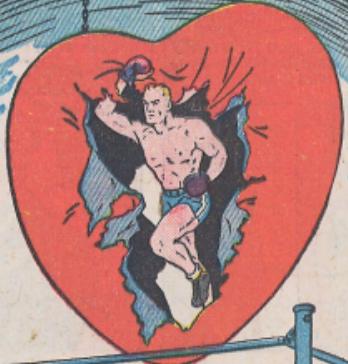


"I COULDN'T LAUGH THEN--EVEN IF I WANTED TO! MY PAST LIFE Faded AWAY--AND ALL I COULD FEEL WAS THE WONDERFUL THRILL OF JOHNNY'S LOVE--AND MINE!"

DARLING...



I... I'VE GOT TO  
RUN AWAY FROM HIM...  
AS FAST AND FAR AS I  
CAN! HE'S WON... BUT  
I'VE LOST MY CHANCE  
FOR LOVE!



THIS IS A STORY OF THE RING, OF  
FLYING FISTS AND ROARING CROWDS!  
IT'S THE STORY OF A CHAMPION'S FIGHT  
FOR FAME... AND FOR THE LOVE THAT  
LAY BURIED DEEP IN A WOMAN'S  
HEART! YES, IT'S A FAR CRY FROM  
THE THUD OF LEATHER TO THE IMPACT  
OF SEARING KISSES, BUT IT'S  
ALL IN...

# ROMANCE of the RING

"I'M LINDA SAYRES, READER... AND I'VE GOT  
A STORY TO TELL YOU! LET'S BEGIN IT NOW  
... AS I BOARD THE SMALL STEAMER THAT  
WILL CARRY ME AWAY FROM THE WRECKAGE  
OF MY LIFE..."

"MAYBE... I'M A COWARD  
TO RUN AWAY FROM IT ALL!... I'VE  
DONE MY BEST TO MAKE UP FOR  
MY MISTAKES... BUT WHY DID I  
HAVE TO MAKE SUCH A MESS  
OF EVERYTHING?"

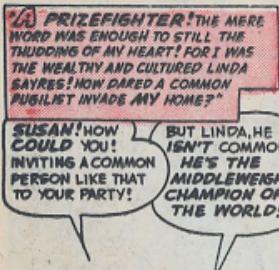


"I FOUND A  
RICKETY DECK  
CHAIR AND SANK  
DOWN IN IT. I  
HAD TO THINK...  
THINK! HOW HAD  
IT COME ABOUT,  
THIS GHASTLY  
SITUATION FROM  
WHICH I WAS  
FLEEING? I RECALLED  
SUSAN'S BIRTHDAY  
PARTY, WHERE  
IT ALL BEGAN..."

"THIS IS YOUR FIRST BIG  
AFFAIR, SUSAN! REMEMBER,  
YOU'RE NOT MY KID SISTER  
ANYMORE... AND IT'S ABOUT  
TIME YOU DROPPED THAT  
SAD SACK OF A BOY.  
FRIEND YOU HAVE, TOO!"

"WHO... BERTY?  
SURPRISE, LINDA...  
YOU CAN NOW STOP  
NAGGING ME  
ABOUT HIM!"





"*HE SWERVED TOWARD HIM, MY EYES HOLDING HIS! AND THE NEXT INSTANT, OUR LIPS MET IN A CLOSE KISS--AND A STRANGE FEELING OF WEAKNESS SWEEPED OVER ME! BUT I THRUST IT FROM MY MIND, WHICH HAD ROOM FOR BUT A SINGLE THOUGHT--I'VE CONQUERED THE CHAMPION OF THE WORLD!*"



"YES, JACKIE WAS MY CONQUEST--MY SLAVE! NIGHT AFTER NIGHT I DISPLAYED HIM, DRAWING HIM INTO MY HECTIC ROUND OF PARTIES AND GAIETY--"

I DON'T KNOW HOW TO PUT IT INTO WORDS, LINDA--BUT I'M LIKE A MAN REBORN! I NEVER KNEW THERE WAS SO MUCH FUN IN LIFE!"

UH-HUH! GLAD YOU MET ME--AREN'T YOU?"

"I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN THAT THE NEWSPAPERS WOULD MAKE A STORY OUT OF OUR ROMANCE! ONE NIGHT RETURNING FROM A DATE WITH JACKIE, I FOUND--SUSAN!"

WHY, WHAT ARE YOU DOING UP SO LATE? AND YOUR EYES--THEY LOOK AS IF YOU'VE BEEN CRYING!"

THIS STORY IN THE PAPERS...DON'T PRETEND YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT'S THE MATTER!"

OH, FORGET IT! DON'T TELL ME MY LITTLE SISTER BELIEVES EVERYTHING SHE READS IN THE GOSSIP COLUMNS!"

IF IT ISN'T TRUE, WHY HASN'T JACKIE PHONED ME ONCE SINCE MY BIRTHDAY PARTY? AND I KNOW HE'S BEEN TAKING YOU OUT!"

GET THIS KID! I CAN'T STOP JACKIE FROM RUNNING AFTER ME NOW--BUT HE'LL SOON REALIZE HE MEANS NOTHING TO ME! HE'LL COME BACK TO YOU THEN!"

DO YOU--REALLY THINK SO? IF--IF ONLY HE WOULD! FORGIVE ME, LINDA--I--I TRUST YOU!"

"SHE CRIED HERSELF TO SLEEP IN MY ARMS! BUT WHAT I HAD TOLD HER WAS TRUE! JACKIE LADS MEANT ONLY ONE THING TO ME--ANOTHER CONQUEST, NOTHING MORE! I WAS SURE OF IT!"

SLEEP WELL, SUSAN--AND DREAM OF YOUR JACKIE!"

"BUT MY TROUBLES WERE NOT YET OVER! NEXT MORNING, I HAD A VISITOR--"

LOOK, MISS SAYRES--I AIN'T INTERFERIN' IN YOUR LIFE! I'M ONLY ASKIN' YOU TO LEAVE MY BOY ALONE! JACKIE IS GONNA DEFEND HIS TITLE AGAINST BIFF O'BANION--AN' IF HE DON'T WANNA GET THE LICKIN' OF HIS LIFE--HE BETTER CUT OUT THE FANCY LIFE!"

YOU'RE HIS MANAGER, McCARTHY--NOT I! IT'S UP TO YOU TO MANAGE JACKIE!"

BUT YA GOTTA HELP ME! HE'S A GOOD BOY--THEY DON'T COME NO BETTER! BUT IF YOU DON'T STOP ENCOURAGIN' HIM, HE'S IN FOR TROUBLE!"

REALLY? IF YOU DON'T MIND...GOODBYE!"



"JACKIE AND I CONTINUED GOING OUT TOGETHER..."



"THE TIME PASSED SWIFTLY IN A ROUND OF PLEASURE! THEN CAME THE NIGHT OF THE FIGHT... AND AS I WALKED DOWN THE AISLE TO MY SEAT, I FELT A HUNDRED EYES ON ME... AND I HEARD THE WHISPERS AS I WAS POINTED OUT!"



"THE CHAMP'S GIRL! INWARDLY, I LAUGHED AT THE FOOLS! I, THE CHAMP'S GIRL? NO! HE WAS MY SLAVE!"

"WE'RE ALL INVITED TO JACKIE'S DRESSING ROOM AFTER THE FIGHT... FOR A LITTLE PARTY HE'S HAVING!"



"THE CHEERS DIED OUT... THERE WAS A MOMENT OF HUSHED, EXPECTANT SILENCE... AND THEN THE BELL RANG"



"SOMEHOW, JACKIE DIDN'T SEEM SURE OF HIMSELF! O'BANION WAS SMASHING BLOW AFTER BLOW INTO HIM! ROUND FOLLOWED ROUND... AND SOON THE CROWD WAS BLOWS JACKIE! AND I FELT THE BOOS IS THOUGH THEY HAD BEEN DIRECTED AT ME!"



"I LOST COUNT OF THE ROUNDS... AND I DIDN'T REALLY REALIZE WHAT HAPPENED UNTIL I HEARD THE CROWD GO WILD WITH CHEERING... AND I SAW JACKIE LYING ON HIS BACK, IN THE MIDDLE OF THE RING!"





"HE WASN'T PREPARED FOR WHAT HAPPENED NEXT! FOR JACKIE'S POWERFUL ARMS SWEEP ME AGAINST HIM IN A TORMENT OF BITTER EMOTION! HIS LIPS CRUSHED MINE, FILLING ME WITH A FRENZIED FIRE I HAD NEVER KNOWN!"



"BREATHLESSLY, I WATCHED HIM STEP BACK FROM ME..."

"THAT WAS REAL LOVE, LINDA... A SAMPLE OF WHAT YOU COULD HAVE HAD! BUT YOU PREFER THE CHEAP IMITATION... AND YOU CAN HAVE IT!"



"WITH THAT, HE WAS GONE! I STOOD THERE DESOLATELY, MY BODY WRACKED WITH A STRANGE, BITTER-SWEET PAIN! I HAD NEVER BEEN TREATED THIS WAY BEFORE... BUT NOW I WANTED TO FEEL HIS ARMS ABOUT ME ONCE MORE, HIS LIPS ON MINE!"



"BUT SUSAN HAD SEEN AND HEARD ALL THIS FROM A GREAT DISTANCE. I SENSED HER WORDS, FELT THE STINGING IMPACT OF HER SLAP..."

"SO YOU WEREN'T INTERESTED IN HIM... COULDN'T HELP HIS FOLLOWING YOU AROUND! YOU, MY OWN SISTER... YOU LED HIM ON... STOLE HIM FROM ME! YOU... YOU CHEAP LIAR!"

"STOLE HIM FROM ME! YOU... YOU CHEAP LIAR!"

"I COULDN'T REPAIR MY HEART... BUT MAYBE I COULD UNDO SOME OF THE HARM I HAD CAUSED! SO... NEXT DAY..."

"SO IT'S YOU, HUN? HAVEN'T YA DONE ENOUGH HARM? WHAT MORE DO YA WANT?"

"I DON'T BLAME YOU FOR FEELING THAT WAY, MR. McCARTHY! BUT THIS TIME I WANT TO HELP JACKIE! I WANT TO BUY HIS CONTRACT FROM YOU!"

"YOU'RE CRAZY! ANYWAY, HE'S NO GOOD NOW! HE'S ALL BUSTED UP INSIDE! NO HEART LEFT!"

"I THINK I KNOW HOW TO RESTORE IT... AND HELP HIM WIN BACK HIS CHAMPIONSHIP!"

"WELL, LINDA SAYRES... HOW DO YOU LIKE YOURSELF? SELFISH... STUPID... CHEAP! I'M EVERYTHING HE SAID I WAS! I'VE BROUGHT RUIN TO JACKIE... UNHAPPINESS TO SUSAN... AND BROKE MY OWN HEART IN THE PROCESS!"



"I BOUGHT JACKIE'S CONTRACT---AND HIRED McCARTHY TO HELP TRAIN HIM FOR A RETURN BOUT WITH THE NEW CHAMPION! THEN I DROVE OUT TO THE TRAINING CAMP..."

WHAT'S THE IDEA OF RUSHING ME INTO A RE-TURN BOUT, MAC? AND WHAT'S THIS ABOUT A NEW MANAGER?

IT WASN'T **MY** IDEA, KID! AND THIS FIGHT AINT THE **ONLY** THING YER NOT GONNA LIKE ABOUT YER NEW MANAGER!



"I'M YOUR MANAGER NOW JACKIE---AND YOU'LL DO WHATEVER I TELL YOU AND FIGHT WHENEVER I DECIDE! I OWN YOUR CONTRACT---AND THE BOXING COMMISSION WILL BACK ME UP!"

LINDA! YOU!

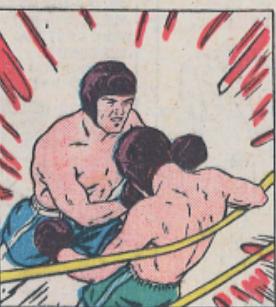


"THESE WERE HIS ONLY WORDS---BUT I FELT HIS HATRED AND CONTEMPT CURL ABOUT ME LIKE A WHIPLASH! SILENT, SULLEN, HE OBEYED MY ORDERS."

TAKE A SHOWER AFTER THE NEXT ROUND---THEN POLISH OFF WITH A 5-MILE RUN!



"THE DAY'S PASSED IN SMOLDERING RAGE! JACKIE BOXED VIOLENTLY---AND I FELT DEEP IN MY HEART THAT EVERY TIME HE STRUCK, HE SAW ONLY **MY** FACE IN FRONT OF HIM! AND I FELT EVERY BLOW, AS IF I WERE HIS ADVERSARY!"

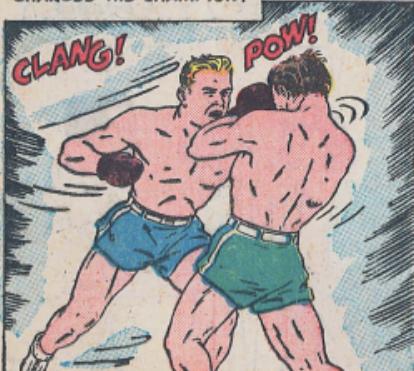


"YES, I KNEW THAT HATRED WAS THE ONLY THING THAT COULD MAKE HIM FORGET THE HURT I HAD CAUSED HIM! IT ENOUGH---TO WIN BACK HIS CHAMPSHIP? THE NIGHT OF THE FIGHT, JUST BEFORE THE BELL, I PLAYED MY LAST TRUMP!"

IT'S NOT TRUE THAT I RUINED YOUR CAREER---AND I'M GOING TO PROVE IT! WHY, YOU WERE A **MAS-BEEN** BEFORE YOU EVEN MET ME! YOU'RE IN THE BEST SHAPE EVER RIGHT NOW---AND I'M **STILL** GOING TO ENJOY SEEING BIFF O'BANION BEAT YOU TO A FRAZZLE!



"THE BELL RANG---AND I SAW COLD FURY, PENT-UP HATRED RISE IN JACKIE'S FACE! LIKE A MADMAN, HE CHARGED THE CHAMPION!"



"O'BANION NEVER KNEW WHAT HIT HIM! FIRST A FLURRY OF FLYING FISTS, THEN...**OBLIVION!**"



HE'S THROUGH... AND JACKIE'S CHAMP AGAIN! BUT I'M THROUGH, TOO---THERE'S NOTHING TO KEEP ME HERE ANY LONGER...

"AMID WILD CHEERS FOR THE RE-CROWNED CHAMPION, I SLIPPED AWAY, PREPARED A NOTE AT HOME..."

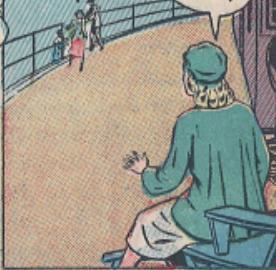
"DEAR SUSAN,  
I'VE BEEN A FOOL, AND MY SELFISHNESS HAS DONE TERRIBLE THINGS TO YOU AND JACKIE. I'M GOING AWAY, NEVER TO RETURN. TRY TO FORGIVE ME, AND BE HAPPY WITH HIM--YOU TWO BELONG TOGETHER. BY THE TIME YOU GET THIS, THE S.S. PARAGUAY WILL BE ON THE HIGH SEAS.  
GOODBYE, DEAR,  
LINDA."

"WHAT'S THE WAY IT ALL HAPPENED? AND NOW I WAS IN A DECKCHAIR ALONE WATCHING NEW YORK'S SKYSCRAPERS RETREAT INTO THE FOOG!"

"IF--IF ONLY I HAD IT TO LIVE OVER! MY FRIENDS, MY SISTER, THE MAN I LOVED--ALL GONE! BUT I'VE COME OUT OF IT WITH HONEST EYES--I CAN SEE MYSELF AS I APPEARED TO OTHERS--AS I REALLY WAS! BUT IT'S TOO LATE!"

"THROUGH MY THOUGHTS CAME THE ROARING OF A SPEEDBOAT, A HAIL! THE SHIP SLOWED--AND THEN..."

"LINDA! LINDA!  
...THERE SHE IS!  
SUSAN! HOW DID YOU GET HERE?"



"HOW IN BERT'S SPEEDBOAT, OF COURSE I DECIDED OLD LOVES WERE BEST--SO I WENT BACK TO HIM!"

"LET HER GO, SUSAN  
--LET HER SEE WHO ELSE IS HERE!"



"THAT VOICE--IT WAS JACKIE! AND THE NEXT MOMENT I WAS IN HIS ARMS, ROARING WITH A HAPPINESS I HAD THOUGHT WAS LOST FOREVER!"

"OH JACKIE--JACKIE!  
I--I NEVER DREAMED  
YOU'D WANT TO SEE  
ME AGAIN--NOT AFTER  
WHAT I PUT YOU  
THROUGH! I--  
THOUGHT YOU  
HATED ME!"

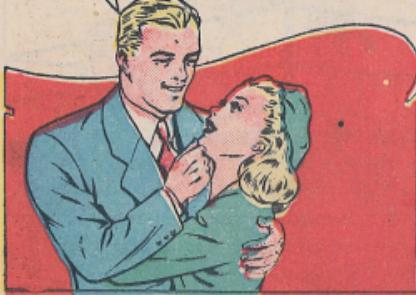
"IT WAS DURING THAT TRAINING  
THAT I FOUND OUT YOU  
REALLY LOVED ME, LINDA!  
YOU'D NEVER HAVE DONE IT  
IF YOU HADN'T CARED! AND  
IT WASN'T HATRED THAT  
MADE ME WIN THAT FIGHT  
--IT WAS LOVE! LOVE  
FOR YOU!"



"AND THERE'S ONE MORE THING I HAVE TO TELL YOU, LINDA! YOU'VE REALIZED YOUR MISTAKES--YOU'VE ADMITTED THEM--AND YOU'VE MADE UP FOR THEM! THAT'S SOMETHING ONLY ONE PERSON COULD DO-- SOMEONE WITH THE HEART OF A CHAMPION! AND YOU'VE GOT IT!"

"HOW'S ABOUT LOOKING UP THE CAPTAIN, BERT?  
LET'S SEE IF HE CAN'T PERFORM A DOUBLE MARRIAGE!"

"SWELL IDEA, SUSAN!  
AND WELL ALL STAY  
ON THE BOAT FOR  
A DOUBLE HONEYMOON!"



# PRETEND There's SOMEONE<sup>5000</sup>

**T**HREE was a knock on the door. "Answer that, June," said Linda, indolently filing her fingernails.

June rose obediently and went to the door. Linda's disinterest vanished as she heard June say, "Flowers? For me?"

Linda's lips curled contemptuously. How long did June think she could get away with that silly pretense? Ever since Linda had found the florist's bill, pitifully small, she had known June's secret. Known it and laughed at it.

For it was plain that June was sending *herself* these flowers, as well as the little bottles of perfume, the notes, the trinkets that had been arriving every week. And it was plain *why*! Linda's eyes narrowed as she watched her roommate placing the flowers in a low bowl. *Jealousy, that was it!*

Her voice cut sharply through the silence. "Isn't it about time you gave that childishness up?" Linda asked sneeringly.

June blushed a hot red and then turned pale. "What . . . what do you mean?"

"I mean that you're making a fool of yourself! Just whom are you trying to impress . . . me? Well, don't bother! While your flowers are wilting, I'll be out tonight, dancing. And *not* with a figment of my imagination!"

June managed to keep the tears back until Linda had reddened her lips, smoothed her bangs and flounced out of the door. And then they came, pouring down her cheeks in an uncontrollable flood.

Lying face down on her bed, June shook with sobs. Linda was the glamorous one, the sought-after one, the accom-

plished flatterer who managed to wheedle dates and gifts from numberless men who came and went in her life. For the past year, since they had been sharing their little apartment, June had seen all the romance and excitement pass *her* by, while Linda primped and giggled and danced.

"It . . . it was harmless, my pretending," June sobbed, alone in the room. She had so wanted the feeling of being wanted! She had longed to be courted and admired. But Linda's dates, smooth and sophisticated, had acted as though she didn't exist! That was why she had started to play the little game . . . *pretending there was someone . . .*

A knock on the door made June start up. Her cheeks were flushed and tear-stained, her hair tousled, as she opened the door, opened it to stare questioningly at the handsomest young man she had ever seen!

"Miss Linda Beck?" he asked.

"No, Linda's out. I'm her roommate, June Hollis. Is there anything I . . ."

"I'm Tom Hollander, a friend of Linda's brother," he said. "When they heard I was coming East, they asked me to stop in and say hello. Something tells me I'm going to be *glad* I did!"

June's smile was like the beginning of a sunrise. "Won't you come in?" she said.

At twelve-thirty, when Linda got home, she took one look at Tom and started her campaign. But Tom soon set her straight. "Thanks for finding me my girl, Miss Beck," he smiled. "I'm not being presumptuous, am I, June?"

June smiled demurely, and a bit wickedly. "No, Tom," she said.

# SOMETHING NEW... *Something DIFFERENT!*

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STANDS

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So near, and yet... so far!  
Love was only a step away,  
but it was a step I could not  
take! Would I ever be free  
of the wheelchair that kept  
me prisoner? Would I ever  
cling instead to the arms  
of a man? What power  
could give me... **LOVE?**



"I was about five years old when it happened—a sunny little girl, daughter of Jim Brand, manager of the Pittstown coal mines! I remember hunting for pretty pebbles and rocks..."

LAINY FIND SPARKLY ROCKS FOR MUMMY AND DADDY! LAINY SURPRISE THEM!



"They had warned me over and over... 'Lainy, stay away from the shafts! They're dangerous... BAD!' But I was small and inquisitive! I didn't understand that big word... DANGEROUS... until..."

OH! LAINY FALLING!  
OOOH! —



"Swamped by helplessness, panic, I lay there, whimpering with pain! The shaft, black and cold, held thousands of nameless fears for me..."

MUMMY... DADDY... I'M HERE... FIND ME!...

"Time dragged! Faint with terror, pain and hunger, I wondered whether Mummy and Daddy had missed me... we're looking for me! And high above, hundreds of Searchers hurried to help a heartbroken mother..."

NO, MRS. BRAND,  
SHE'S NOT BEEN ON  
THE HIGHWAY!

FIND MY  
LITTLE GIRL...  
PLEASE...  
PLEASE!

"The next morning, they found the deserted shaft!

For many hours I had known nothing but the beating of my terror-stricken heart! When I could no longer stand it, a merciful darkness descended over me!"

SHE'S DOWN HERE!  
THROW ME A LINE!

"A whole night had passed before they found me!... a night filled with more horror than any little girl could describe! I shivered and cried when I found my mother's arms again..."

LAINEY, BABY, YOU'RE  
SAFE NOW! TELL ME,  
DOCTOR, IS SHE  
ALL RIGHT?

I CAN'T TELL  
THAT UNTIL I  
EXAMINE HER,  
MRS. BRAND!  
BETTER LET ME  
CHECK HER FOR  
BROKEN BONES!

"I screamed with pain as Dr. Olds touched my leg!"

I'M AFRAID LAINEY'S FRACTURED A BONE HERE... BUT IT'S NOT TOO BAD! WE'LL HAVE HER RUNNING AROUND AGAIN IN NO TIME!

I'M GRATEFUL!  
IT COULD HAVE BEEN WORSE!

"The doctor had said in no time!

After two months or so, we went to his office.

I was going to run about again... We were so happy..."

SHE'S HEALED  
BEAUTIFULLY! COME  
ON, LAINEY... WALK  
INTO YOUR MOTHER'S  
ARMS!

COME TO  
MUMMY, DARLING...  
LAINEY...  
LAINEY!

"Sometimes. I can still recall the sound of Mother's desperate cry!"

And as the months went by, and the years, the desperation gave way to a sorrowful resignation! It was many years, however, before she could bring herself to admit the truth..."

"YOU DON'T HAVE TO SAY IT, DR. OLDS... I KNOW! LAINEY CAN'T WALK... SHE WILL NEVER WALK!"

"I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT, MRS. BRAND... HER LEG HEALED YEARS AGO! AND YET... YOU'RE RIGHT! LAINEY CANNOT WALK!"

"Waiting outside, I couldn't hear them, but I knew the truth, too!"

"I had tried so many times to stand... to take ONE STEP! But I couldn't! A great fear kept me chained... powerless... A GIRL IN A WHEELCHAIR!"

"DR. OLDS SAYS YOU'LL BE FINE, LAINEY! JUST A LITTLE MORE TIME... AND PATIENCE!"

"I KNOW, MOTHER... I KNOW!"

"Yes, I knew! As Mother wheeled me down the hall, we were each thinking our own thoughts, afraid to speak them aloud..."

"MY DAUGHTER... NEVER TO WALK... HOW WILL SHE FACE IT?"

"I'LL MAKE SOME SORT OF LIFE FOR MYSELF... IN THIS WHEELCHAIR!"

"By the time I was eighteen, I had made that life! It was quiet, unexciting, UNREAL!"

"I learned to know the meaning of sympathy and devotion, but there was one word I did not completely understand... LOVE!"

In the movies, in books, in the neighborhood park, I saw and heard the word and I felt a deep longing... a longing that could never be satisfied!"

He looked deeply into her eyes, tenderly. And then, in a low voice, he said the words she had been waiting to hear: "Darling, I love you!"



"For me,  
every day  
was like the  
day before!

I never  
expected to  
know the  
thrill of  
romance,  
of love...  
and then...  
one bright  
afternoon...  
a stranger  
came up our  
steps and  
spoke to  
me..."

IS MR. BRAND IN?

NO, BUT  
I EXPECT HIM  
SOON! I'M HIS  
DAUGHTER, ELAINE!  
WON'T YOU SIT  
DOWN?

"For no  
reason at  
all, I felt  
myself  
blushing  
as he  
looked at me!  
He could not  
see my  
wheelchair,  
off in a  
corner!  
He saw only  
a pretty  
girl, swinging  
in a  
hammock...  
FOR TWO!"

MIND IF I SIT  
NEXT TO YOU?

WHY... WHY,  
NO... OF  
COURSE  
NOT...

"I tried to tell him, subtly, that I was not...  
not like other girls! But it was hard..."

MY, YOU'RE PRETTY!  
I FEEL A STRANGE,  
IRRESISTIBLE IMPULSE  
COMING ON!

YOU... YOU'RE  
A NEWCOMER TO  
PITTSTOWN,  
MR. ... ER ...

"My heart pounded with fear as he drew  
closer! And, in that fear, was something  
else... excitement... anticipation... hope..."

I'M GOING TO  
HAVE TO KISS  
YOU!

PLEASE... PLEASE  
... YOU DON'T --

"He lifted  
me in his  
arms and...  
KISSED  
ME!  
My  
FIRST  
kiss!

I clung  
to him,  
dizzy with  
emotion,  
feeling  
his arms...  
his lips..."

"And then...  
he released  
me... and  
I sank to  
the floor!  
The look of  
horror on  
his face as  
he realized  
the truth  
shocked me...  
told me that  
I must  
forever cast  
aside all  
daydreams!"

I... I'M SORRY!  
I CAN'T WALK,  
YOU SEE!

I'M SORRY...  
I DIDN'T KNOW...  
WILL YOU EXCUSE  
ME... I'VE GOT  
TO BE GOING...

"That night, I faced myself squarely and spoke aloud the words that had been whispering in my heart! I could no longer deceive myself..."

YOU ARE TO **FORGET**  
LOVE ... YOU MUSTN'T EVEN  
THINK OF IT! THERE  
WILL BE NO LOVE  
FOR YOU... EVER!

"That was my resolve!

That one episode had shown me my path... and I would **NEVER** waver!

And so, my face was calm, my pulses steady. When Dad said, one week later...

LAINY, THIS IS KIRK TAYLOR, A SAFETY ENGINEER FROM THE CENTRAL OFFICE! HE'LL BE VISITING WITH US WHILE HE CHECKS THE MINES!

HOW DO YOU DO, MR. TAYLOR?

"He was attractive... strong, quiet, kind-looking!

But I was taking no chances with my heart!

I wanted no explosions! And so, THIS time, I made certain..."

DINNER'S READY, EVERYBODY!

MR. TAYLOR, WILL YOU WHEEL ME INTO THE DINING ROOM?

"After a few days, he was calling me Elaine... and I called him Kirk! It was good to have him with us! Sometimes, I caught myself dreaming... if only... **IF ONLY...**"

WHAT ARE YOU THINKING OF, ELAINE?  
YOUR EYES ARE LIKE STARS!

NOTHING THAT WOULD INTEREST YOU, KIRK... I'M AFRAID!

No, nothing I could tell him! Yet, whenever I saw Kirk, my heart would leap, my eyes would shine!

I wanted to touch him... to know he was near! But my legs... my legs remained cold and dead... a reminder of my vow!"

HE'LL BE LEAVING IN A WEEK OR SO... WHY START SOMETHING I CAN NEVER FINISH?

"But sometimes, the head will lay plans that the heart will not follow! And who's to know which one is right?"

WHY, MOTHER, YOU'RE SMILING LIKE THE CAT THAT'S GOT THE CANARY! WHAT'S THE GOOD NEWS?

DON'T YOU REMEMBER, LAINY? TOMORROW'S YOUR BIRTHDAY AND WE'RE HAVING A PARTY!

"My nineteenth birthday! I had never dressed so carefully... paid so much attention to the way I looked! I wanted to be beautiful, loved... like OTHER girls!"

HERE'S TO  
LAINEY!

THE PRETTIEST  
GIRL IN  
TOWN!



"I had eyes only for Kirk, who was standing close to Liz Burdette... TOO close! She was smiling, touching his arm... and he was smiling, too! Suddenly, I wanted to cry, but..."



"I didn't wish... I PRAYED! And I needn't tell what my prayer was! I shut my eyes tightly and..."

SHE'S BLOWN  
'EM ALL  
OUT!

THAT MEANS  
YOUR WISH  
WILL COME  
TRUE,  
LAINEY!



"Everyone was shaking my hand, wishing many happy returns, kissing me! And then... HE was at my side..."

DO NEW FRIENDS  
RATE A BIRTHDAY  
KISS, ELAINE?

OH, GO  
AHEAD AND  
KISS HER, KIRK!  
DON'T ASK  
QUESTIONS!



"It was not the first kiss I had ever received, but it was the first kiss I had ever GIVEN! Everyone, everything else in the room seemed to fade away as our lips met... and clung..."



"I wanted to cover my face, for I knew I could never hide the truth! And the truth was that... I LOVED KIRK!"

ELAINE,  
I ...

LAINEY, IF YOU DON'T  
MIND, I'D LIKE TO  
SPEAK TO YOU...  
PRIVATELY!



"LIZ BURDETTE AGAIN!  
A sense of warning, of danger,  
stole over me as she wheeled  
me into the study, away from  
the crowd! I didn't want  
to hear her, but I was  
helpless!"



DON'T BE  
A FOOL,  
LAINEY.  
I CAN SEE  
WHAT'S  
HAPPENING!

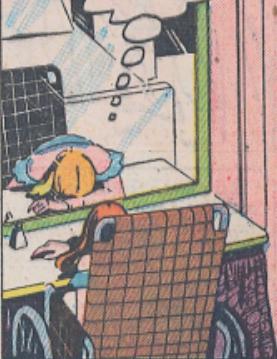
"I knew what she meant...  
and I trembled as she  
spoke..."

KIRK'S NOT FOR YOU, LAINEY.  
NO MAN IS! WHAT RIGHT  
HAVE YOU TO ENCOURAGE  
HIM? WHAT CAN YOU  
GIVE HIM? HOW CAN YOU  
MAKE HIM HAPPY? ... A  
GIRL LIKE YOU? I DON'T  
WANT TO BE CRUEL,  
LAINEY, BUT...



"But the truth was cruel!  
I left the party and went to  
my room! Alone, I could cry  
my heart out and bid fare-  
well to my dreams! That was  
the bitterest moment of my  
life... but I had to see it  
through!"

I MUST FORGET  
HIS KISS... FORGET HIM!  
IT WON'T BE HARD TO  
DO WHEN HE'S...  
WHEN HE'S...  
GONE!



"From that moment on, I  
decided to treat Kirk casually,  
as if he were no more than a  
guest in our house! The next  
morning, at breakfast, I  
managed to mask my feelings  
... but it was difficult...."



THANKS,  
NO... I'VE  
SOME  
LETTERS  
TO WRITE...

"I pretended to fuss with  
a letter, but I could hear  
Kirk's voice coming from  
the study... his and dad's..."

I'VE COMPLETED MY SURVEY,  
MR. BRAND, AND I'M READY  
TO REPORT TO THE  
CENTRAL OFFICE...



GLAD YOU  
DIDN'T FIND  
ANYTHING  
WRONG  
IN MY MINE,  
KIRK!

"I caught my breath as I  
detected a change in Kirk's  
voice! It was suddenly  
flat... ominous..."

I DIDN'T SAY THAT, MR. BRAND!  
AS A MATTER OF FACT, THERE  
IS SOMETHING WRONG...  
DANGEROUSLY  
WRONG!



"Kirk was telling Dad that he had found a trouble spot in one of the mines... that he wanted Dad to have it reinforced... IMMEDIATELY!"

I'LL HOLD OFF MY REPORT TILL YOU HAVE IT FIXED, SIR!

YOU'RE WRONG, SON! YOU'RE JUST LOOKING FOR TROUBLE WHERE THERE ISN'T ANY... I'LL SHORE IT UP WHEN THE WORK STARTS!

"Dad's swell, but he hates to be advised by a younger man! I could hear the stubborn ring in his voice... and the anger in Kirk's!"

RUN ALONG, BOY... STOP LOOKING FOR TROUBLE!

I'VE FOUND IT, SIR! IF YOU WON'T HAVE THAT MINE SHAFT CHECKED, I'LL DO IT MYSELF!



"There was a terrible silence, and then I saw Kirk, grim and white-lipped, stride from the study! I wanted to say something... but I knew I must not interfere!

Something was going to happen... something I couldn't prevent!"



"Early next morning, I stationed myself at a window overlooking the shafts! Mother and Dad were out for the day and I was alone with my love... my love and fear for Kirk, who was somewhere... DOWN THERE!"

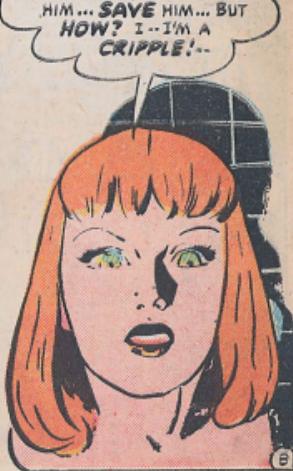
HE'S THERE... BY HIMSELF... IN THAT HORRIBLE SHAFT! OH, PLEASE, GOD, DON'T LET ANYTHING HAPPEN TO KIRK!

"My prayer came too late! As I looked down the sloping hill that led to the mines, a piercing chill struck at my heart! From far below, I heard the treacherous rumbling... and then..."

IT'S A CAVE-IN! AND KIRK'S IN THERE... ALONE!

"For an instant, I was stunned, sick with the picture that sprang to my mind! Then panic flooded me, torturing me, racking me, driving me to desperation!"

HE... HE'LL BE KILLED! I LOVE HIM... I MUST HELP HIM... SAVE HIM... BUT HOW? I--I'M A CRIPPLE!--



"How I reached that shaft I shall never know! Perhaps a POWER stronger than our own comes to our aid in distress..."

KIRK, KIRK, DARLING!  
CAN YOU HEAR ME? TRY TO ANSWER, KIRK!



"Fighting my hysteria, I drew close to the mouth of THAT SHAFT... the shaft I had feared and hated since childhood! But my own fears seemed far away as I saw the man I loved... far below..."

HE'S THERE... THANK GOD I'VE FOUND HIM!  
BUT... THAT FIRE!  
NO, KIRK... NO!



"FIRE! The word tore from my throat like a shriek of pain! In a surge of fear, I realized that Kirk was as helpless as I... no! MORE helpless! For HE lay unconscious at the bottom of that shaft while I could think... ACT!..."

YES... ACT! I'VE... GOT... TO... WALK... GOT TO SAVE KIRK... GOT TO WALK...

"I don't remember clearly what happened then! I knew only... Only that Kirk's life depended on ME! And that I must not fail him... or myself!..."

"LAINEY WILL SOON BE ABLE TO... RUN ABOUT!"  
-- OH, THE PAIN!  
KIRK, DARLING... I'M COMING!



"There was a pulley in the mouth of that shaft! Even though I had never gone near it... not since I was five... I remembered it well! It was part of my plan..."

I'M COMING,  
KIRK!  
YOU'LL BE  
ALL RIGHT,  
DARLING!  
YOU WILL...  
YOU MUST  
BE!



"That shaft was an old nightmare to me! I had to fight MYSELF as well as the flames that swept toward us... But I seemed to have a mysterious power fighting within me... helping me..."

HE'S UNCONSCIOUS...  
I'VE GOT TO GET HIM OUT! THE PULLEY WILL HOLD HIM... I'LL SEND HIM UP... ABOVE GROUND TO SAFETY!  
AS FOR ME... AS FOR ME...



The pulley moved... clumsily... rusted with disuse... but I saw Kirk rising to the pure, clean air above! I had to stay below, but my feeling of triumph soared with him!"

"The fumes... the smoke... they were too strong for me to combat! Secure in the knowledge of Kirk's safety, welcoming the relief that oblivion would bring. I almost surrendered to the call of death! And then, just as it happened so many years ago..."

SHE'S DOWN  
HERE! THROW  
ME A LINE!



"They told me that Kirk was recovering in the hospital! Dad sat at my bedside, ashamed to cry... but wanting to..."

I WAS A STUBBORN OLD FOOL, LAINEY! YOUNG TAYLOR WAS RIGHT! AND... WE ALMOST LOST YOU!

THINGS WILL BE BETTER NOW, DAD... DON'T WORRY!



GOODBYE,  
DARLING!  
PERHAPS I... WAS  
ALWAYS MEANT  
TO DIE HERE...  
IN THIS  
SHAFT...

"The old wheelchair was near my bed, waiting for my day of recovery! But a new strength, a new power had come over me... together with the irresistible longing to see Kirk!"

MY OLD FRIEND, I THINK THE TIME HAS COME FOR US TO SAY...  
GOODBYE!

I saw him from the doorway of the hospital room... one second before he looked up and saw me... STANDING THERE! The light in his face was all I needed to give strength to my faltering footsteps..."

ELAINE... DARLING... WALK! WALK TO ME!

I'M COMING, KIRK!



"I walked to him! Kirk couldn't walk to me as yet, so I... Elaine Brand... WALKED TO HIM! For I had discovered THE GREATEST POWER a woman can have... LOVE!"



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